



**CENTRAL
OKANAGAN**
ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT
COMMISSION

Central Okanagan Economic Profile

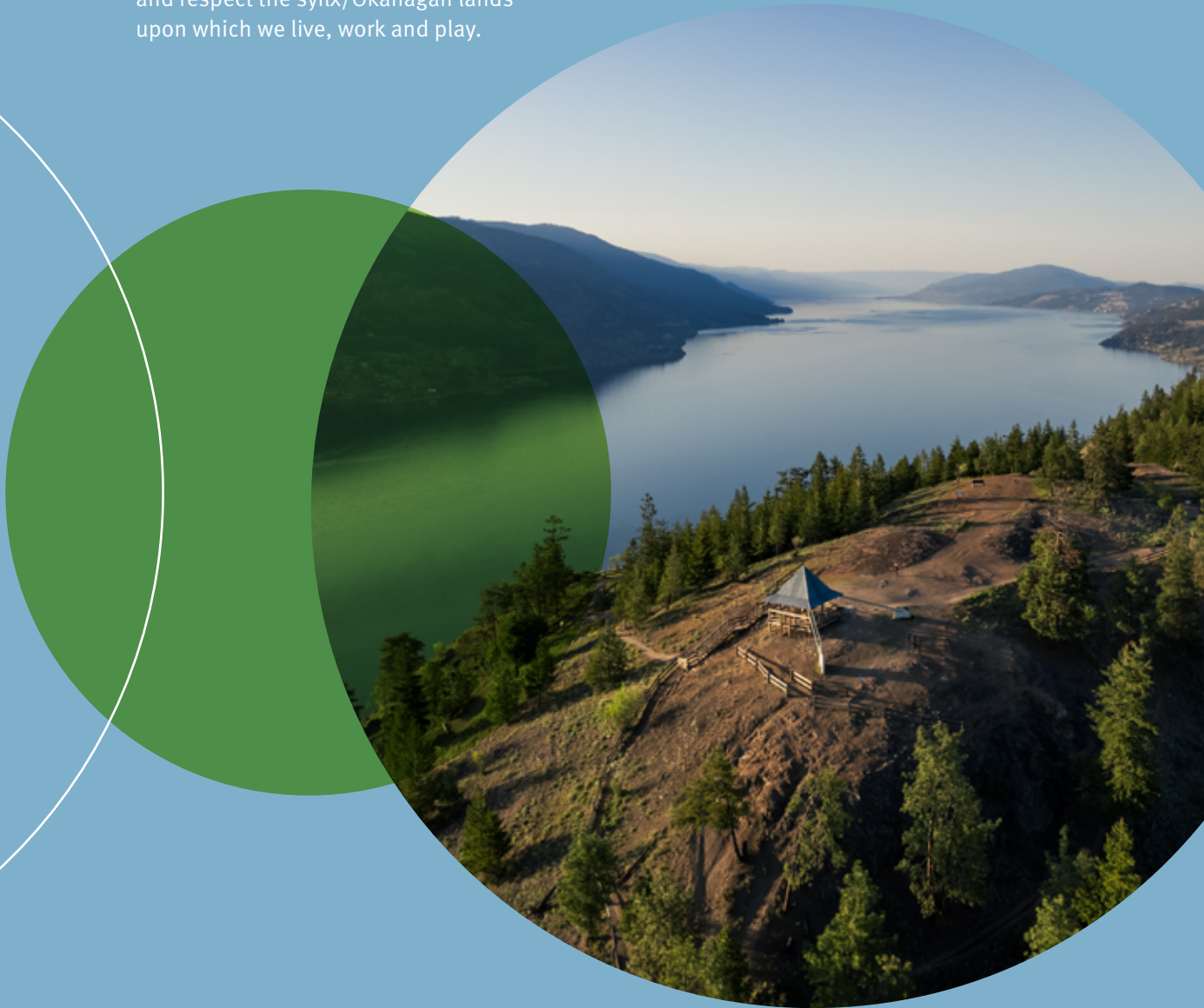
2023 Edition



Regional District of
Central Okanagan

Land Acknowledgment

The Regional District of Central Okanagan (RDCO) acknowledges our presence on the traditional, ancestral and unceded $t\acute{m}x^w\acute{u}la?x^w$ (land) of the syilx/Okanagan people who have resided here since time immemorial. We recognize, honour and respect the syilx/Okanagan lands upon which we live, work and play.



What is $t\acute{m}x^w\acute{u}la?x^w$?

$t\acute{m}x^w\acute{u}la?x^w$ means the land and everything that lives and interacts on it. It's an all-encompassing word that expresses the intersectionality of land and nature.

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WHO IS THE COEDC?

The Regional District of Central Okanagan's (RDCO) Economic Development Commission (COEDC) works in partnership to facilitate and encourage the development of a healthy and dynamic sustainable community economy by supporting existing businesses and encouraging new business investment within the Regional District of Central Okanagan.





At the COEDC, we believe in encouraging new business investment and fostering vibrant and sustainable growth. With specialized programs and personalized support from our business development team, we're here to help you find your place—and your people—in our community.

Serving the RDCO, with networks from Peachland to Lake Country, we're perfectly situated to help fuel a diverse and resilient local economy across this special part of the valley.

With an Advisory Committee made up of more than 40 influential industry leaders, community shapers and elected officials, our finger is always on the pulse of challenges and opportunities facing our local business community.

JOIN US IN CREATING AN EXCITING AND SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC FUTURE.

How We Can Help:

- 1 Starting a New Business**
We are here to help get your idea off the ground with resources and local connections that will support you and your business.
- 2 Grow an Existing Business**
Whether you are looking for one-on-one support, data or strategic connections to guide your next steps, tap into our expertise and resources to achieve your business potential. We can help you with market development, labour force attraction, funding information, access to regional data and statistics and more.
- 3 New Resident**
Welcome home. Whether it was the lifestyle or the professional opportunities that brought you to the region, the Central Okanagan is the perfect place to grow a business and a family. Let our team help you find your place—and people—in our community.

THE LAND THE PEOPLE AND ITS HISTORY

The Regional District of Central Okanagan is situated in the traditional, ancestral and unceded t̓m̓x̓'úla?x̓' (land) of the syilx/Okanagan people. The syilx/Okanagan people have lived in this region since time immemorial, and the Regional District of Central Okanagan acknowledges, honours and respects their ancestral lands upon which our collective citizens live, work and play.

The syilx nation is comprised of seven member communities in the Southern Interior of British Columbia and one in Northern Washington State. The territory extends over approximately 69,000 square kilometres. It is a unique and beautiful landscape of deserts, alpine forests, endangered grasslands, mountains, rivers and lakes. This ecologically diverse land is a haven for many species and it has provided for the syilx people since time immemorial. They are a distinct and sovereign nation whose members share the same land, culture, customs and language which is called nsyilxc̓ən. The syilx people, feel a deep connection with the land, water and with their relatives, the animals and the trees and all living things that share the environment.

For thousands of years, syilx people were self reliant and well provided for through their own ingenuity and use of the land and nature. They lived united as a nation with a whole economy, travelling the breadth and depth of their territory, hunting and fishing, growing and harvesting, crafting and trading to meet our needs. Syilx ceremonies and practices continue to reflect generations of knowledge, respect and honour for food animals and plant harvests. They are guided by our captikw̓ł (story systems and the teachings embedded in our nsyilxc̓ən language). The ability of syilx people to have survived upon the land, over thousands of years, is based upon the principle of reciprocity. When they were created, a covenant was made that they would act as caretakers of nxw̓łxw̓łtant̓ət (that which gives us life). In return, they would be looked after. This bond of reciprocity, responsibility, and cultural ways of knowing have been handed down to them from their ancestors and will continue to be passed down through the generations to come through our captikw̓ł. The captikw̓ł serve as a reminder of syilx natural laws and protocols that are needed to be followed for future generations to survive in harmony with the tm̓x̓'.

According to the syilx belief, k̓'ul̓ənc̓út̓ən, the Creator of oneself and arranger of the world, wished the original people of the Okanagan to be here. The syilx/Okanagan people have a profound connection to the land and animals and their history has been transmitted across generations without emphasis on specific dates. Their history emphasizes the essence of being syilx.

The syilx/Okanagan people have a deep connection to their ancestral lands and continue to assert their jurisdiction and responsibility over the stewardship of their land, resources and people's quality of life. The nsyilxc̓ən language and their culture reflect a profound respect for the natural laws of the tm̓x̓', which includes not only the land, but also the water, air and all living beings within their territory.





Why the Central Okanagan?

1 Strong and Diverse Economy

There's strength in diversity: manufacturing, aerospace, agriculture, viticulture, digital tech, health, tourism, the list goes on

High-tech composite jet components, flight tracking and aviation communications, aircraft maintenance and engineering, fiberglass film props, wooden acoustic panels, compostable phone cases, fruit beverages and snacks, world-class wines, recreational and medicinal cannabis, animation & game development, Canada's premier medical electronic record platform, the list goes on and on. These are some of the products and services from leading companies that call the Okanagan home. It's this mix and diversity of services, sectors and industries that drive innovation and the thriving entrepreneurial ecosystem found in the Central Okanagan.

2 Access to Talent

The fastest growing metropolitan area in Canada

Not only is the Central Okanagan the fastest growing metropolitan area in Canada with population growth outperforming B.C. and Canada's growth, but the region has also seen above average growth in the labour force.

There is also a strong pipeline of qualified talent in this vibrant community: the University of British Columbia's Okanagan Campus, inspiring the next generation of entrepreneurs, innovators and leaders since opening its doors in 2005, and Okanagan College's experiential learning and hands-on training in areas like engineering, science, viticulture, wine studies, animation, aerospace and commercial aviation.

3 Entrepreneurial Region

Canada's hot spot for entrepreneurs

Here, on the shores of Okanagan Lake and surrounded by towering Ponderosa Pines, businesses are born. From apples and grapes to tech and aerospace innovators, the region's history of transforming startups into success stories earned the City of Kelowna (the Central Okanagan's largest city and economic hub) its status as "Best City to Open a Business" according to the Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB). The supportive business environment, competitive tax climate and spirit of collaboration get startups, established businesses and innovative thinkers excited.



4 Location & Connectivity

Largest trading centre between the two largest cities in Western Canada – Vancouver & Calgary

Tucked away in British Columbia's Southern Interior at the halfway point between Vancouver and Calgary, the Central Okanagan is the largest population hub between Canada's two major western cities.

When you start your business here, you're at the heart of not only our small-business-focused market but also within reach of more than 14 million potential customers within a range of 900kms, equivalent to a one-day journey by road. With Kelowna International Airport in the Central Okanagan linking you to the rest of the world, the only limit is your imagination.



5 Quality of Life

Seven unique communities nestled along the mountains and Okanagan Lake

There's a reason the Central Okanagan is the fastest-growing metropolitan area in Canada. A four-season playground with some of Canada's best weather, the region offers endless options for a balanced lifestyle. Each of the region's unique, but interconnected communities, offers the best of all worlds – urban or rural, lakeside or mountainside. Stunning beaches, acres of orchards, award-winning wineries, year-round hiking trails, a rich arts & culture scene, premier healthcare facilities and exceptional schools make the Central Okanagan the perfect place to grow a business and a family.



About the Central Okanagan

Statistics Reporting

Under Statistics Canada, the Central Okanagan is defined within the boundaries of the Central Okanagan Census Division (CD) as well as the Kelowna Census Metropolitan Area (CMA). For the purposes of this report, the census data for the Kelowna CMA was used for statistics labelled 'Central Okanagan'.

The Kelowna CMA contains nine Census Sub-Divisions (CSD): Kelowna, West Kelowna, Lake Country, Peachland, Tsinstikeptum 9, Tsinstikeptum 10, Central Okanagan, Central Okanagan West, and Duck Lake 7. These nine CSDs are presented throughout this report; however, some of the CSDs have been joined and or re-named to simplify the statistics and assist the reader in understanding their geographical location.

The changes are as follows:

- **Tsinstikeptum 9 and Tsinstikeptum 10 (combined) = Westbank First Nation**
- **Central Okanagan = Central Okanagan Electoral Area East**
- **Central Okanagan West = Central Okanagan Electoral Area West**
- **Duck Lake 7 = Okanagan Indian Band**

For the purposes of this report, other CMA's used for comparison throughout the document include: Toronto CMA, Vancouver CMA, Victoria CMA, and Calgary CMA.

Location

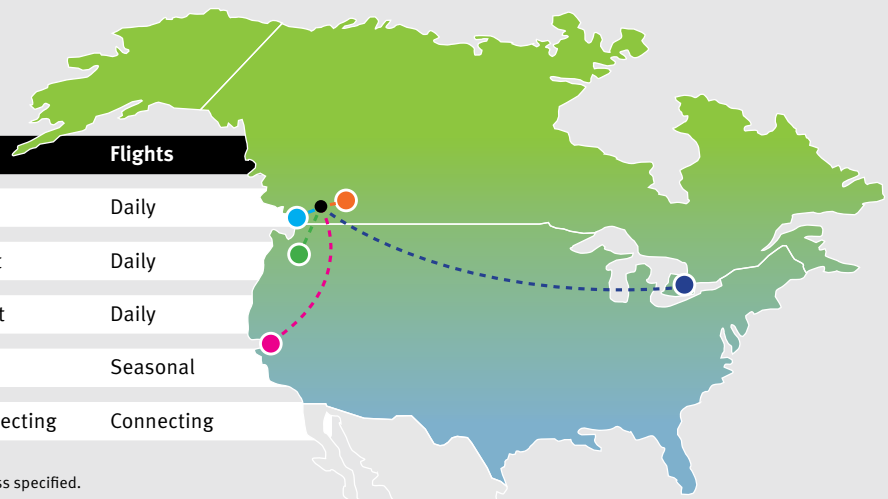
Sitting in the beauty of the Okanagan Valley of British Columbia, the Central Okanagan is surrounded by mountains, orchards and vineyards. The region spans the shores of Okanagan Lake (135 km long) and encompasses more than 314,000 hectares of diverse topography in the Interior of British Columbia. The region is made up of a string of lakes created by glaciation, sandy beaches and tall forests. From lakeside to mountaintop, the Central Okanagan's location is unparalleled.

The Central Okanagan is the largest trading centre between Vancouver and Calgary—Western Canada's two largest cities. It's conveniently accessed by road or air from several major population centres in Canada and the United States. The Kelowna International Airport (YLW) is British Columbia's second gateway airport connecting the entire Okanagan Valley. With more than 75 commercial flights serving close to 2 million passengers each year, YLW is the 10th busiest airport in Canada.

If you prefer to drive, the region is located roughly midway between Vancouver and Calgary near the Trans-Canada Highway—a major east-west Canadian corridor.

Proximity to Markets

City	Driving Distance	Flight Time	Flights
Vancouver	390 KM	1 hr, direct	Daily
Calgary	605 KM	1 hr 25 min, direct	Daily
Toronto	3,965 KM	4 hr 10 min, direct	Daily
Seattle	500 KM	1 hr 5 min, direct	Seasonal
San Francisco	1,800 KM	4 hr 30 min, connecting	Connecting

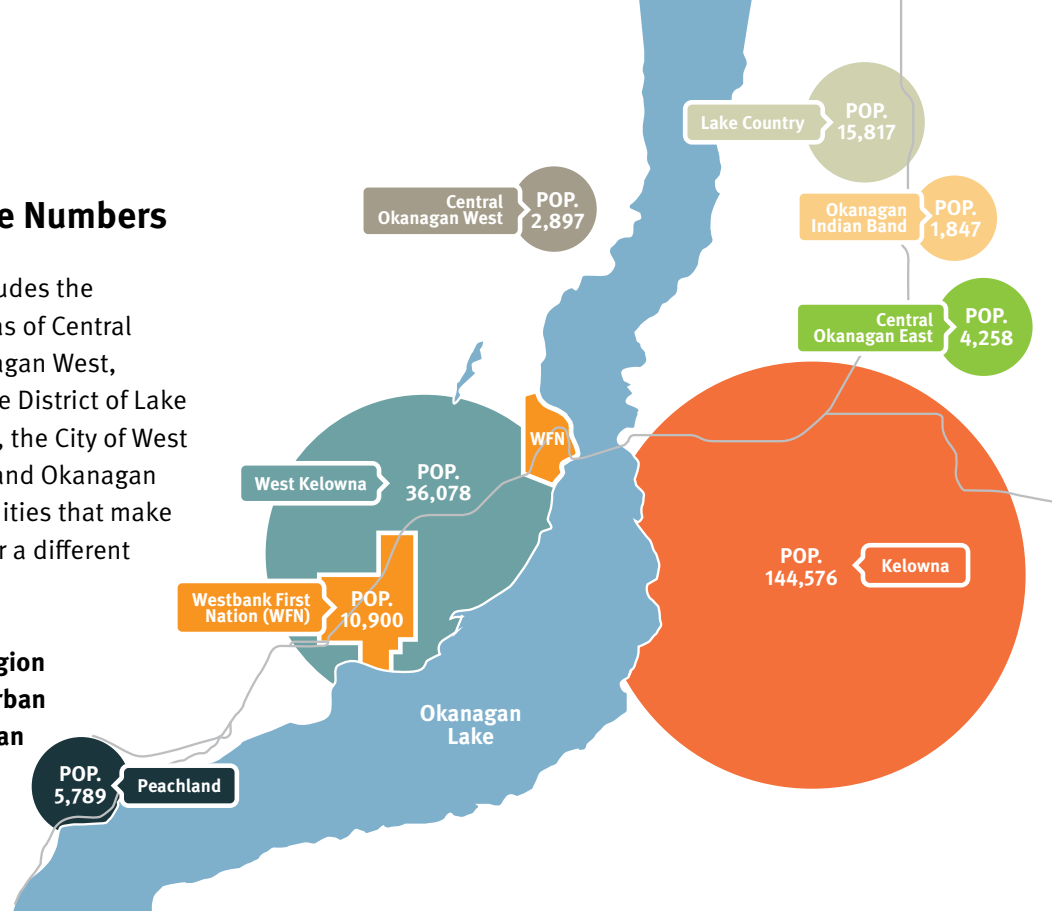


Data used in this report are from Statistics Canada, [Census 2016](#) and [2021](#) unless specified.

Central Okanagan by the Numbers

The Central Okanagan region includes the two unincorporated Electoral Areas of Central Okanagan East and Central Okanagan West, along with the City of Kelowna, the District of Lake Country, the District of Peachland, the City of West Kelowna, Westbank First Nation, and Okanagan Indian Band. Each of the communities that make up the region are unique and offer a different flavour to cater to every lifestyle.

Ranked as the fastest growing region in Canada and the third largest urban area in British Columbia, more than 222,000 people call the Central Okanagan home.



Population Growth Comparison

Geographic Name	Population 2021	Population % change 2016 to 2021
Kelowna CMA	222,162	14.0%
Victoria CMA	397,237	8.0%
Vancouver CMA	2,642,825	7.3%

Female
51.1%

Average Age
44.2

Median Age
44.4

Male
48.9%

Demographics

The Kelowna CMA population grew by 14% from 2016-2021 - **the fastest growing census metropolitan area in Canada** - compared to BC at 7.6% and Canada at 5.2%. The region's population also grew at a much faster rate than other major metropolitan areas like Vancouver (7.3%), Toronto (4.6%) and Calgary (6.4%).

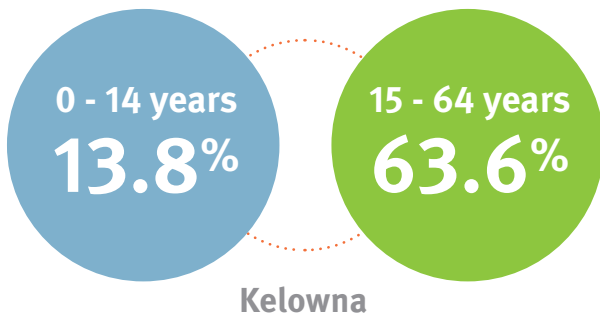


BC Stats Population projections for Kelowna CMA:

2030 > 290,635 2040 > 339,954
 2035 > 317,781 2045 > 360,377

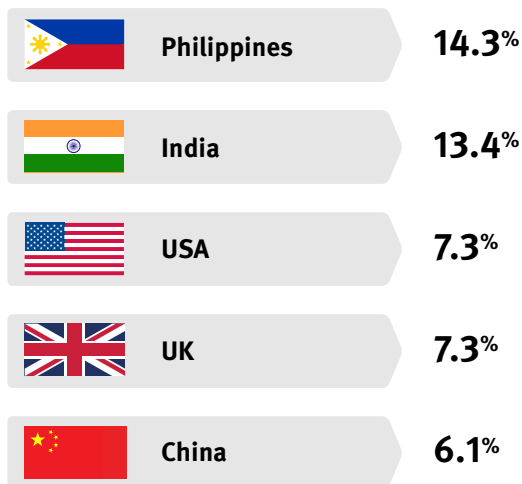
Population growth driven predominantly by migration – people moving to the region from other areas of Canada and from other countries.

Total Population by Broad Age Groups 2021



The Central Okanagan’s population is not only growing but also shifting significantly, particularly when it comes to age. Historically thought of as a retirement destination, current trends show that the region is getting younger.

In 2021, the Kelowna CMA's immigrant population was 14.4% of Kelowna’s total population, with the top 3 countries of birth being the UK, India and Germany. Kelowna has seen an influx of immigrant population in recent years from the following countries:



The total population of indigenous identity has decreased in Canada by -0.95% whereas British Columbia grew by 1.0%, and the Kelowna CMA grew by 0.1%.

In general, the Indigenous population in Kelowna CMA is younger than the non-Indigenous population. Indigenous children aged 14 and under represented 23.9% of the total Indigenous population, while non-Indigenous children aged 14 and under accounted for 13.3% of the non-Indigenous population.



Mother tongue speakers of nsyilxcən grew by 50% since 2016.

Now recognized as an official language, nsyilxcən (also called Okanagan) is being taught throughout the Okanagan. Plans are underway to teach nsyilxcən to youth throughout School District #23, as well as at sensisyusten House of Learning, an elementary school operated by Westbank First Nation. The syilx Language House Association coordinates a four-year nsyilxcən language program, offers immersion classes and teacher training. It also publishes language materials to promote, preserve and revitalize nsyilxcən.



Labour Force and Education

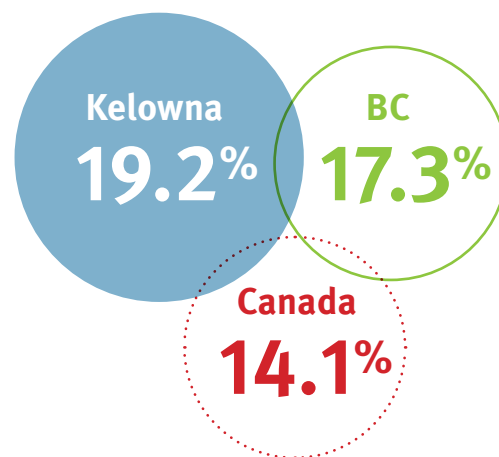
Labour Force Status – 2016 to 2021 Percent Change

Geographic Name	Population aged 15 years and over (%)	In the labour Force (%)	Employed (%)	Unemployed (%)	Participation Rate (%)	Unemployment Rate (%)
Canada	5.9	3.4	0.5	37.9	-1.5	2.6
British Columbia	8.5	7.5	5.6	34.8	-0.6	1.7
Kelowna CMA	15.3	15.1	13.9	30.8	-0.1	0.9

Labour Force Statistics

It's easy to see why the Central Okanagan has earned the reputation as Canada's fastest-growing and most entrepreneurial region. The area is attracting a younger labour force at an exponential rate. From 2016-2021, its population aged 15 years and older surged by 15.3% as compared to elsewhere in B.C. and Canada (8.5% and 5.9% respectively). The region also saw the largest increase in labour force (15.1%) and employment (13.9%), higher than that of B.C., other CMAs and the rest of Canada. This influx of young, skilled, working-age adults on a career-building track is key to the region's labour force and economic development.

Self-Employed



Employment by Industry

The Central Okanagan has a vibrant entrepreneurial culture with a strong business support ecosystem. According to Statistic Canada's 2022 Business Count, the region is home to 32,598 registered businesses. Kelowna CMA boasts a greater number of entrepreneurs, with a higher proportion of self-employed (19.2%) compared with B.C. (17.3%), Canada (14.1%) and other CMAs. With its entrepreneurial culture, strong educational and business support networks, this bustling startup community is ideal for starting and growing a business.

Top 3 Industry Sectors

Healthcare & Social Assistance	14.0%
Retail Trade	12.7%
Construction	11.5%



Fastest Growing Industry Sectors by Share Of Labour Force (2016-2021)

Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	6.6% to 8.0%
Health Care and Social Assistance	12.9% to 14.0%
Education Services	6.1% to 7.0%



Top 3 Occupations

Sales and Service Occupations	27.1%
Trades, Transport and Equipment Operators and related occupations	18.7%
Business, Finance and Administration	16.1%





Education

When it comes to education, Canada ranks top of the class, spending more on education per capita than any other country in the G8. With Canada's free, accessible and high-quality public primary and secondary schools, it's not surprising that 95% of Canadians choose public school education for their children.

K-12

The Central Okanagan School District (SD#23), the fifth largest district in British Columbia with approximately 24,000 students, serves residents within all the communities of the Regional District of Central Okanagan. The school district's mission is to educate students in a safe, inspirational learning environment where each student develops the knowledge and skills to be a lifelong learner and a healthy productive member of our global society.

Post-Secondary Education

The Central Okanagan boasts several top-tier post-secondary institutions that combine globally-recognized education with strong ties to the entrepreneurial community.



University of British Columbia Okanagan (UBCO)

The most established and influential global rankings all consistently place the [University of British Columbia \(UBC\)](#) in the top five percent of universities in the world (top 20 public universities in the world) and among the top three Canadian Universities.

The [University of British Columbia's Okanagan campus \(UBCO\)](#) is a top-ranked university that bolsters the strength of UBC as one of the world's leading universities. An innovative hub for research and learning, UBCO is founded in partnership with local indigenous peoples, the syilx Okanagan Nation. The Okanagan campus combines UBC's high standard of education with connectivity to the local entrepreneurial community. UBCO's rising population of domestic and international students is helping turn the Okanagan into Canada's fastest growing region.

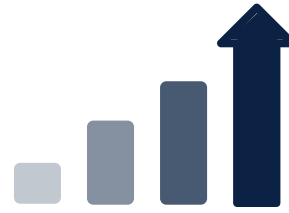


AT A GLANCE



of Graduates Stay in the Okanagan Region

\$280M



in Total Revenue (2022/23)



Active Research Projects since 2022



4,051

Faculty and Staff



UBCO Downtown Campus

After more than 16 years on the outskirts of the city, UBCO is expanding to downtown Kelowna. Given the rapid growth of the campus, the goal is to create more opportunities for community-engaged research, collaborations and social innovation. It's expected that UBCO's presence in downtown Kelowna will enhance UBC's excellence in research, innovation and teaching.

Okanagan College

Okanagan College plays a key role in shaping and impacting regional socio-economic development. The college is rich in cultural diversity and academic support. With smaller class sizes, industry-experienced professors and practicum opportunities, this community of learning places students at the heart of all they do. It provides direct support to the Central Okanagan's economic base through its programs in aerospace technologies, engineering technologies, animation, business, food, wine and tourism.



1,200+ employees
one of the largest employers in the region

Average class size
18 students

60 years
Operating since 1963

17,000
students

60,000
alumni

BC's second largest institution providing skilled trades training and the largest institution outside of the lower mainland



Champion of sustainability reflected on physical and social spaces and economic practices

Hands-on learning in addition to co-op, field and practicum opportunities



AT A GLANCE

[Okanagan College](#) has partnered with Westbank First Nation to create a 6,000 square foot garden which contains more than 50 local Okanagan plants of cultural significance to the syilx people.



Programs include:

Arts, Business,
Commercial Aviation,
Food, Wine & Tourism,
Health and Social
Development, Science,
Technologies, Trades
and Apprenticeship

Campuses and Regions:

Kelowna
Penticton
Salmon Arm
Vernon

Centres:

Revelstoke
Centre

Kelowna
Innovation
Centre

Oliver Centre



CENTRE FOR ARTS AND TECHNOLOGY

One of the leading digital art schools in Canada, the [Centre for Arts and Technology \(CAT\)](#) offers diplomas in art and design. Located in Kelowna, the school has two audio recording studios, dedicated animation labs, an art room, a digital photography and digital filmmaking production studio and an interior design lab.



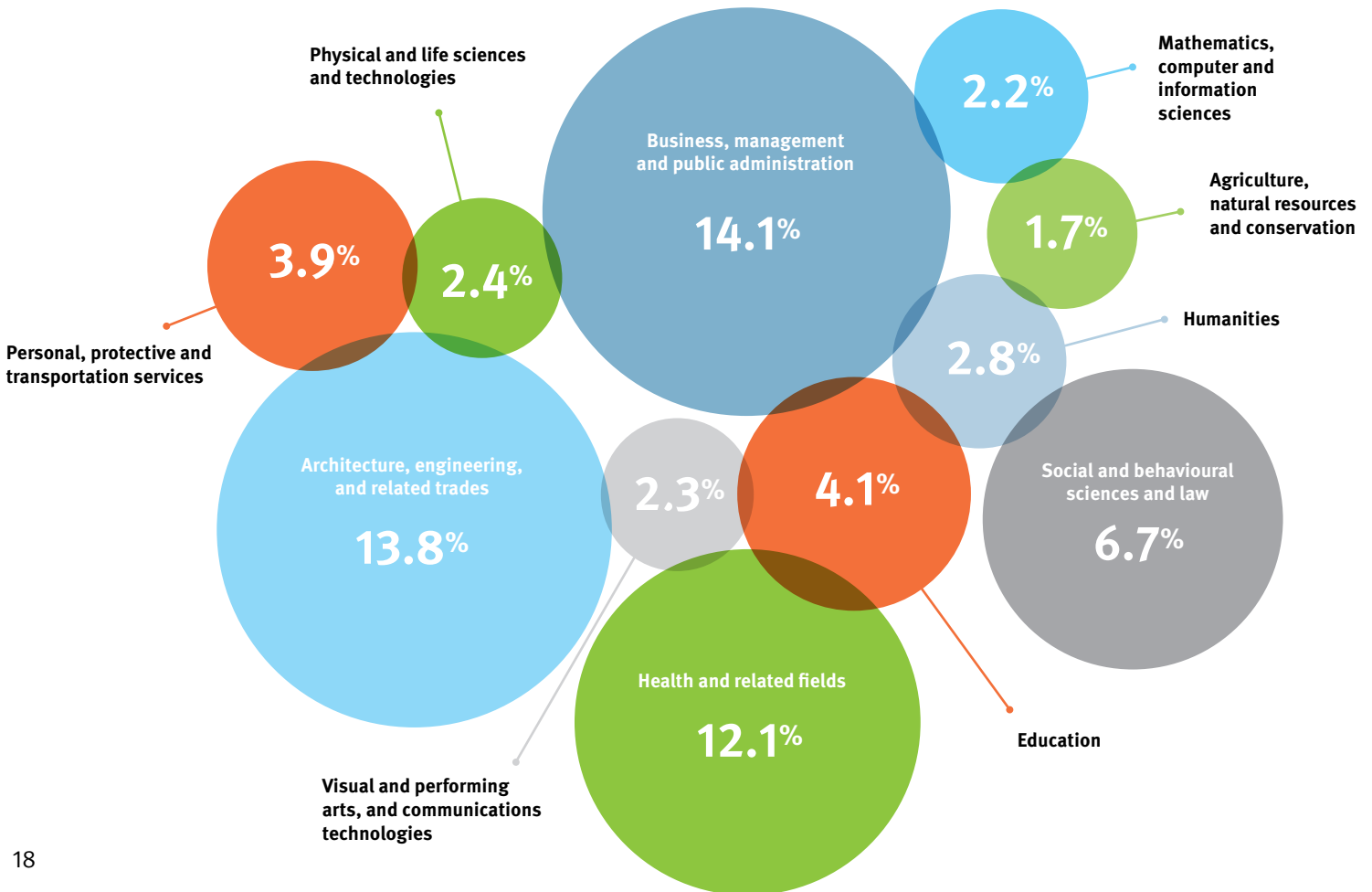
The Kelowna CMA is home to an educated workforce. Between 2016-2021, residents with a bachelor's degree or higher increased by 6.3%, compared to Canada (4.4%), B.C. (5.0%) and other CMAs.

Kelowna CMA has the highest proportion of residents with apprenticeship/trade certificates or diplomas (10.5%), when compared to other CMAs.

Top fields of post-secondary certificate, diploma or degree holders for Central Okanagan residents include business, management and public administration (14.1%) – in line with B.C. (14.1%) and Canada (15%). Architecture, engineering and related tech were the second highest proportion of post-secondary fields of study at 13.8%.

Source: [Census 2021](#)

Major Fields of Study for the Kelowna CMA Aged 25-64 in 2021



Economy, Trade and Business

Access and Proximity to Markets

The largest trading centre between Vancouver and Calgary, with easy access and proximity to markets, the Central Okanagan is an ideal place to live and do business.

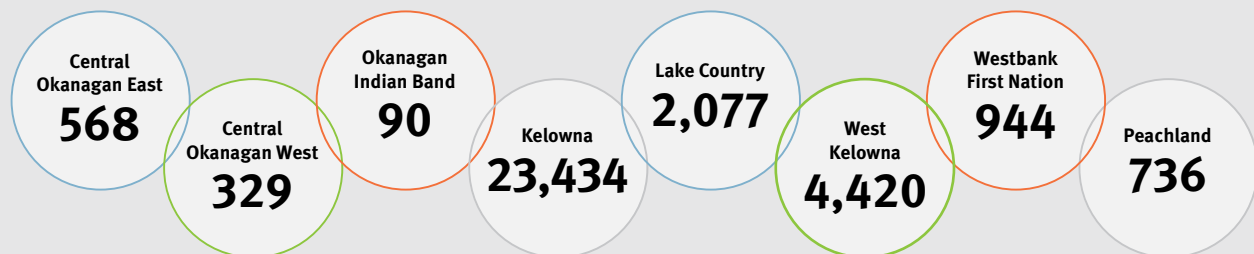
[The Kelowna International Airport \(YLW\)](#) is British Columbia’s second gateway airport connecting the entire Okanagan Valley. With more than 75 commercial flights serving close to 2 million passengers each year, YLW is the 10th busiest airport in Canada. YLW’s economic impact to the province of British Columbia is 4,545 jobs and \$789 million in total economic output. To ensure the continued growth of air service and to strengthen the regional economy, a \$90 million terminal expansion is set to take off at Kelowna International Airport in 2023.



Whether by air or by road, the region is easily accessed by 14 million people within a 900km range or one-day journey by road.

Annual passenger numbers:	1,718,059
International flights:	1,020
Seat capacity:	2,405,461
Total revenue:	\$51,200,000
Grants awarded:	\$19,500,000
Kelowna tax dollars used to support YLW:	\$0
Average	75 daily non-stop flights
Number of Airlines	10 airlines
Number of Desitinations	18 destinations
YLW Terminal Building expansion begins	Summer 2023

Business Counts



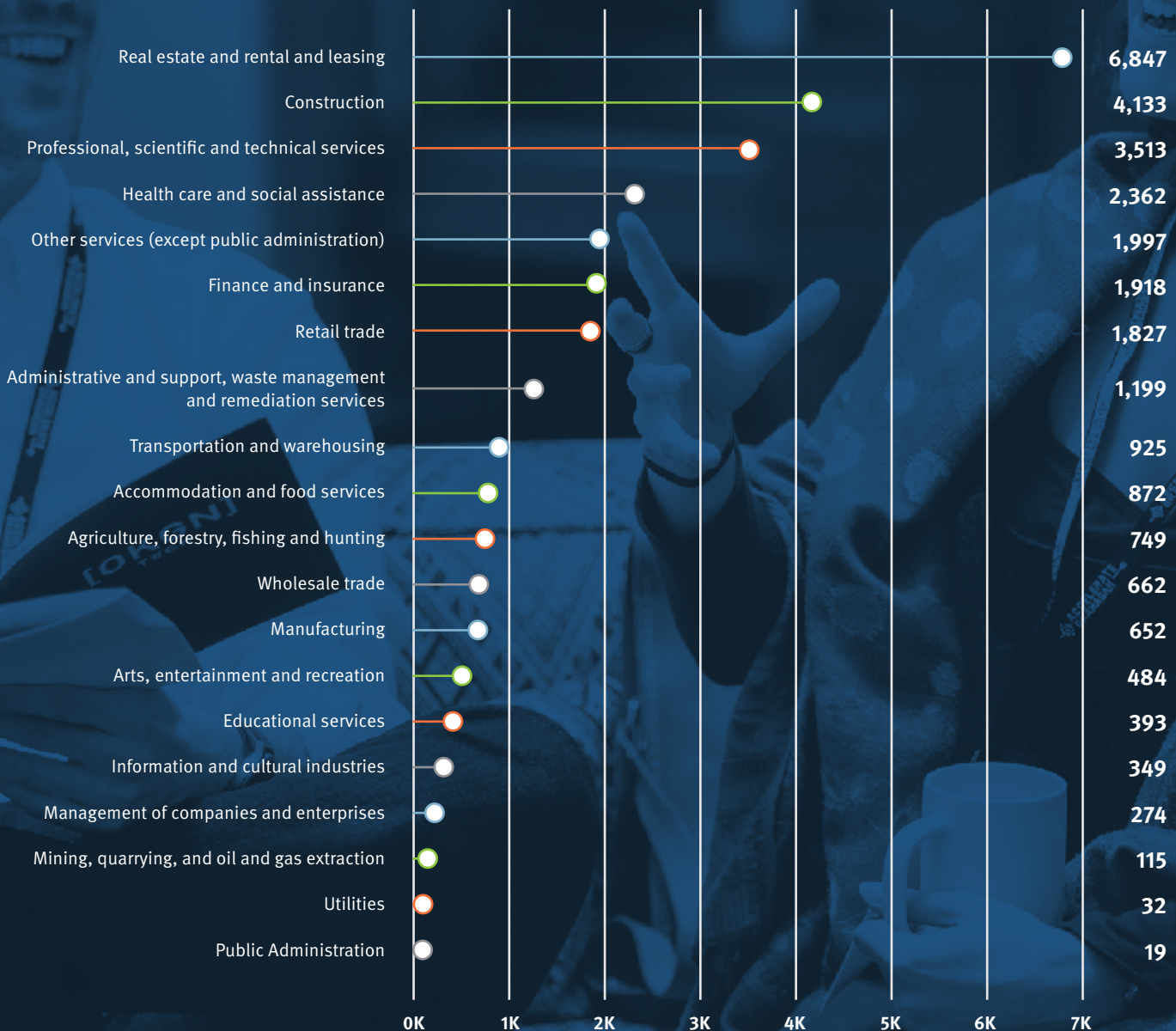
Note that Statistics Canada publishes only those business locations without employees with greater than \$30,000 in revenue. Businesses without employees and less than \$30,000 in revenue are not accounted for in this data representation but are certainly present in the region’s business landscape.

Business by Industry Sector

The highest number of businesses operate in real estate and rental and leasing (6,847), followed by construction (4,133) and professional, scientific and technical services (3,513).

As for businesses without employees, the distribution is as follows, real estate and rental and leasing (6,369), construction (2,620), and professional, scientific and technical services (2,461). The highest numbers of businesses with employees are in construction (1,513), retail trade (1,086), and lastly, professional, scientific and technical services (1,052).

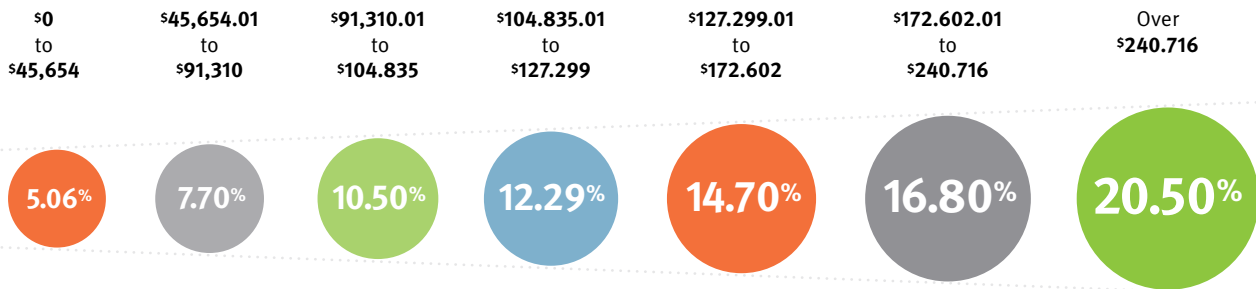
The number of businesses in the Kelowna CMA in 2022 is up by 6.1% compared to 2021, for a total of 32,598. The percentage of businesses with employees is 29.8% and the percentage without is 70.2%.



Tax Incentives

The Central Okanagan has earned the reputation as an ideal location to live and grow a business. Residents and businesses alike appreciate the [Central Okanagan's competitive tax climate](#). B.C. has the lowest provincial income tax for individuals earning up to \$91,310. In 2023, B.C.'s personal income tax brackets and rates are as low as 7.7% for individuals earning \$91,310 or less.

Personal Income Tax Brackets and Rates 2023 Tax Year



Tax rates are applied on a cumulative basis.

Top companies are leveraging B.C.'s competitive corporate tax system and a variety of programs and tax incentives. In the small business category, B.C.'s tax rate of 2% is significantly lower than the 9% elsewhere in Canada.



With streamlined and agile programs in place to create smart regulations that promote growth and innovation, B.C. is pro-business. It offers a wide range of programs to support businesses, from lowering operating costs to providing an avenue for businesses to access essential funds. In some industries, B.C. businesses may qualify for a variety of attractive financial incentives and credits. For more on incentives and tax credits, see [BC's Competitive Business Cost](#).

Get the City's dark fibre network working for you.

Looking to instantly boost your network capacity and speed and minimize inefficiencies while saving time and money?

The City of Kelowna's dark fibre network helps businesses manage their rapidly growing data requirements. Discover the benefits of the City's reliable and secure dark fibre network; grown since 2015.

36 km
Network grown since 2015

10GB
Bandwidth unleashed

Cost of Doing Business

DEMOGRAPHICS	Kelowna CMA	Victoria CMA	Vancouver CMA	Calgary CMA	Toronto CMA
Population	222,162	397,237	2,642,825	1,481,806	6,202,225
Population % Change	14.0%	8.0%	7.3%	6.4%	4.6%
Population Density Per Square KM	76.5	571.3	918.0	290.6	1,050.7
Median Age	44.4	44.8	40.8	38	39.6
LABOUR					
Labour Force	119,495	214,820	1,468,220	825,630	3,347,860
Employed	109,890	200,055	1,341,570	724,205	2,903,480
Participation Rate	63.6%	63.5%	65.7%	69.3%	64.6%
Employment Rate	58.5%	59.2%	60.0%	60.8%	56.1%
Unemployment Rate	5.0%	3.9%	4.8%	6.3%	6.5%
Median After-Tax Household Income	\$75,500	\$75,500	\$79,500	\$87,000	\$85,000
Minimum Wage	\$16.75 / HR	\$16.75 / HR	\$16.75 / HR	\$15.00 / HR	\$16.55 / HR
% Post-Secondary Certificate, Diploma or Degree*	57.0%	61.8%	60.2%	61.1%	60.9%
% Apprenticeship or Trades Certificate or Diploma*	9.6%	7.1%	5.6%	6.3%	3.7%
Average Commuting Duration (Minutes)	19.5	20.2	27.3	24.2	29.8
REAL ESTATE					
Median New Home Price	\$1,225,000	\$1,410,000	\$2,060,000	\$620,000	\$1,070,000
Median Rent 2 Bed Apt	\$1,665	\$1,649	\$1,900	\$1,400	\$1,750
Rental Market Vacancy Rate	1.2%	1.6%	1.0%	2.4%	1.3%
Office Net Asking Lease Rate (PSF)	\$25.00	\$24.01	\$34.25	\$14.31	\$25.76
Office Vacancy Rate	6.9%	6.0%	5.9%	27.3%	10.2%
Industrial Net Asking Lease Rate (PSF)	\$15.00	\$18.05	\$21.10	\$11.79	\$17.09
Industrial Vacancy Rate	1.1%	0.1%	0.2%	2.3%	0.3%
TAXES					
Federal General Corporate Tax Rate	15%	15%	15%	15%	15%
Provincial General Corporate Tax rate	12%	12%	12%	8%	11.5%
Federal Small Business Corporate Tax Rate	9%	9%	9%	9%	9%
Provincial Small Business Corporate Tax Rate	2%	2%	2%	2%	3.2%



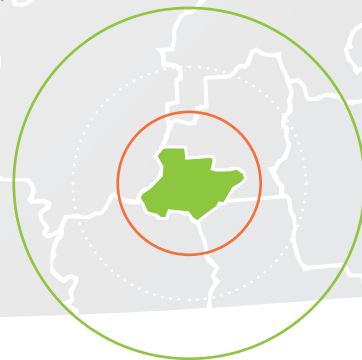
The thriving Central Okanagan is the perfect place to live and work. While Kelowna CMA is the fastest growing region in Canada, its **population density (76.5 per square km)** is significantly lower compared with Vancouver's (918 per square km) or Toronto's (1,050.7 per square km). Combined with having **the shortest commute times**, and **comparable business costs**, Kelowna CMA offers an outstanding lifestyle.

Key Industries

The Central Okanagan: The Most Enterprising Region in Canada

Canada's fastest growing and most entrepreneurial region, the Central Okanagan's economy continues to demonstrate strong growth with a vibrant entrepreneurial culture. Celebrated as a four-season playground, this region is also known as Canada's hot spot for entrepreneurs.

Discover all that this vibrant economy has to offer and what keeps the entrepreneurial spirit alive and well in the Central Okanagan's beautiful landscape. With plenty of assets to spur innovation, there's strength in the region's diversity.





Did You Know that B.C. has one of the largest aerospace sectors in Canada? The Central Okanagan is home to a well-established aerospace industry with companies offering maintenance, repair, avionics, and more.

From aircraft maintenance and engineering to cargo delivery, high-tech flight tracking and aviation communications, the Central Okanagan plays an important role in Canada's aerospace sector, the third-largest in the world.

When it comes to finding local talent, our aerospace companies can rely on a direct pipeline of graduates, including graduating students from Okanagan College's Aircraft Maintenance Engineering program.

Focusing on industry leadership in avionics, pilot training, fixed-wing and rotary aircraft manufacturing and maintenance, as well as innovative research through UBCO's Composite Research Network, the region is set for an upwards trajectory.

Industry Highlights

200	companies in BC
9,300+	direct and up to 20,000 indirect jobs at the provincial level
\$2.4B	in annual revenue provincially (\$1.3B Direct GDP)
18%	of B.C.'s aerospace companies are in the Central Okanagan

Competitive Advantage

YLW houses KF Aerospace, Canada's largest commercial Maintenance Repair and Overhaul Operation

Okanagan College is working with industry to train the next generation of skilled technicians

UBCO's research in advanced materials manufacturing and defense technology

Success Stories

[Aerospace in the Central Okanagan](#)

[AEM](#): A local helicopter avionics firm leads the way

[SKYTRAC](#): A global leader in satellite communications

[KF Aerospace](#): Canada's largest privately held aerospace company



Did You Know that B.C.'s cherry industry produces 95% of Canada's sweet cherries? The Central Okanagan has a long history of agricultural excellence with high-quality farm operations offering diverse products including tree fruits, vegetables and cattle ranching.

The Central Okanagan is home to many different types of farm operations, including tree fruits (apples, cherries, plums, pears, peaches, and apricots), vegetables (fresh and greenhouse), and cattle ranching.

With the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) preserving 6,000 hectares of prime agricultural land in B.C., the Central Okanagan is going to be climbing the "ladder" for generations to come.

There's no question the region's soil, topography and hot, sunny climate provide an excellent agriculture environment, which is supported by food processing facilities, administration infrastructure and reliable transportation routes. Because we're all about keeping it fresh.



Industry Highlights

\$187B+	total reported operating revenue of 737 farms
807	farms employing 5,000+ people
794	agri-food businesses in the Okanagan
51,615	acres in total farm area

Competitive Advantage

B.C.'s cherry industry produces 95% of Canada's sweet cherries, with Canada's exports of sweet cherries reaching \$78 million in 2021

Soil, topography and a hot, sunny, dry climate in the Central Okanagan provide an excellent agricultural environment

Success Stories

[Agriculture in the Central Okanagan](#)

[Jealous Fruits](#): Filling the world's gap in cherry production

[SunRype](#): An iconic BC brand evolves and inspires

[Farming Karma Fruit Co.](#): The next generation of value added agriculture





Did You Know that with 15,000 workers and growing, there are more people employed in the B.C. tech sector than in mining, oil, gas and forestry combined?

With 930+ tech companies living in the Central Okanagan and an economic impact of \$1.7B+, it's no secret that technology has dramatically changed the local landscape, which is part of Canada's Digital Tech Supercluster.

Get started by connecting with the team at Accelerate Okanagan, the region's leading institution for all things digital-tech. While connecting, you'll experience the Kelowna Innovation Centre, a \$35M competitive advantage that is the hub for technology, entrepreneurship and creativity.

The diversity of the area's digital tech boom is exciting. Animation studios, game developers, Canada's premier medical record platform, AI-powered online content filtering systems, aviation satellite data tracking systems ...and the list goes on.



Competitive Advantage

The Okanagan region is a key player in the Cascadia Innovation Corridor, connecting innovators from British Columbia to Silicon Valley. Its digital tech boom includes animation studios, game developers, medical record platforms, AI-powered content filtering systems and more



Success Stories

[Digital Tech in the Central Okanagan](#)

[Two Hat Security](#): To protect and serve - online

[GreenStep Solutions](#): Using technology to save the world

[QHR](#): Canada's top healthcare tech





Cannabis



Did You Know that the Central Okanagan is a cannabis hub for cultivation, production and innovation in research and development? It's not surprising then that industry leaders are choosing to invest in the region.

The world's cannabis market is booming, sitting at an estimated \$28 billion with growth projections of 14% each year for the next five years. Not to be left behind, BC is helping to lead the charge, producing over 40% of Canada's cannabis product output, with its Okanagan Valley serving as home to over 28+ cannabis retail stores.

As one of the most cannabis-centric places in the world (24% of Canada's licensed producers are based in B.C.), the Central Okanagan provides a competitive advantage that few regions in the world currently have.

Even more impressive is the depth and breadth of the research and innovation in the industry, much of which is based in the Central Okanagan. From medicinal and recreational products to cloning and synthetic uses, the Okanagan Valley is revolutionizing how marijuana is used, taking this industry to a higher level.

Competitive Advantage

The Central Okanagan is leading the way in cannabis with its topography, climate, and access to scientific components and breakthroughs with industry collaborative partnerships with Okanagan College and the University of British Columbia Okanagan

Support/Resources

Talent pipeline supported by responsive public post-secondary institutions and directed regional attraction and retention initiatives in cannabis

University of British Columbia Okanagan Campus – Irving K. Barber Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences: UBC's Okanagan Campus

Okanagan College – Cannabis Training

Success Stories

[Cannabis in the Central Okanagan](#)

[Valens Company](#): Homegrown and ready to go higher

[Klonetics](#): Proud to be best in breed

[THC Biomed](#): Poised for high performance



Did You Know that the Okanagan Valley is Western Canada’s premier winery destination with more than 186 licensed wineries, contributing nearly \$3 billion to the provincial economy? What’s more, 86% of B.C.’s vineyard acreage offers a scenic 250km stretch, representing 9,600 acres planted.

With quiet family-run boutique vineyards to world-class operations, the Okanagan Valley wineries are rich in tradition and character, consistently ranking among the world’s best at international competitions.

More and more, wineries are prioritizing sustainability, adopting organic practices and minimizing pesticide use. Wine tourism is thriving, with on-site restaurants and a significant economic impact.

Boasting wine exports to 17 international markets and counting and 14,000+ people being employed in B.C.’s wine industry, the Okanagan Valley is B.C.’s premier grapegrowing region. With an ever-changing panorama, the valley stretches over 250 kilometres, across sub-regions, each with distinct soil and climate conditions suited to growing a range of varietals from sunripened reds to lively-fresh and often-crisp whites.

Okanagan Valley Facts

11	official sub-regions in the Okanagan Valley, each with distinct soil and climate conditions
40°C	daytime temperatures can be reached, but the cool nights allow the grapes to maintain their natural acidity – a signature trait in BC wine
2	warmer and more arid than Napa Valley, the unique Okanagan Valley climate gets nearly two hours more sunlight per day during the peak growing season

Wine Crop Specific Stats

3rd	most common crop in the Central Okanagan is grapes (Cherries #1 and Apples #2)	128	farms with grape as main crop (1,470 acres) in 2021.	2	Pinot Noir and Gris are two major varieties in the Central Okanagan
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Competitive Advantage

The Okanagan Valley is B.C.’s premier grape growing region, with distinct soil and climate conditions suited to growing a range of varietals from sun-ripened reds to lively-fresh crisp whites

Soil, topography and a hot, sunny, dry climate provide an excellent viticulture environment

Geographic proximity to key markets and reliable transportation routes (Port of Vancouver, YVR, YLW)

[New Centre for Tourism and Culinary Arts](#)



Viticulture

Talent pipeline supported by responsive public post-secondary institutions and directed regional attraction and retention initiatives in viticulture

Okanagan College – Viticulture and Wine Studies

University of British Columbia Okanagan Campus – Viticulture Studies

Proximity to research support facilities at the University of British Columbia Okanagan Campus and Okanagan College

University of British Columbia Okanagan Campus – Wine Research Centre

Okanagan College – Viticulture Programs

Okanagan College – British Columbia Beverage Technology Access Centre (BC BTAC)



Success Stories

[Viticulture in the Central Okanagan](#)

[CedarCreek Estate Winery](#): An organic transformation

[Indigenous World Winery](#): The double gold standard

[Okanagan Spirits](#): 100% farm to flask



Tourism



Did You Know that tourism in the Kelowna area alone is a \$2.4 billion dollar industry and is one of the top five industries in the region?

It's no surprise that travelers come to escape the everyday in this beautiful location to enjoy boating, swimming, golfing, skiing, fine wine and dining while visiting orchards, vineyards, galleries, museums, theatres, unique shops and more.

Offering stunning natural beauty with its picturesque landscapes, including rolling hills, lush vineyards and sparkling lakes, the region is renowned for its award-winning outdoor and indoor experiences.

The Central Okanagan offers a range of outdoor activities, including hiking, biking, fishing, boating, and golfing, making it an ideal destination for adventure enthusiasts. The area is rich in cultural heritage and provides opportunities to explore Indigenous history, art, and traditions. And with a vibrant food scene that celebrates farm-to-table dining options, showcasing fresh local ingredients and culinary excellence is just the start.

Industry Highlights

\$540M	in visitor spending in Kelowna alone
135KM	(84 miles) is the approximate length of Okanagan Lake stretching from north to south, sustaining several diverse communities in the Okanagan Valley
Main reasons to visit:	
27% sightseeing	26% winery touring
25% family vacation	20% outdoor or water-based

Competitive Advantage

Kelowna and the Central Okanagan are home to more than 40 wineries

1.84 million unique overnight trips to Kelowna with July and August being the most popular months

\$2.4 billion total economic output (2018/2019)

+222 Wineries in the Okanagan Valley contributing to BC's annual economic impact of \$3.75 billion

Golf industry: 19 golf courses and related activities and travel produce \$3.7 billion toward BC's GDP

With a metro population of over 240,000, Kelowna serves as the transportation, business, and service hub of the valley with the Kelowna International Airport providing easy access to major North American cities with daily flights. YLW Terminal Building expansion is currently ongoing to increase air service capacity and bolster the regional economy

The province provided Okanagan College with \$44.8 million for a new Centre for Food, Wine and Tourism



Manufacturing



Did You Know with 600+ manufacturing firms in the Central Okanagan alone, British Columbia's manufacturing sector is the second fastest-growing in Canada and ranks third in manufacturing employment, surpassing Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba.

With world-class research and innovation in everything from aerospace to waterslides, local companies are developing the technologies and materials of the future, which in turn is attracting forward-thinking entrepreneurs and businesses.

The sheer diversity of manufacturers makes it easy for existing and new businesses to find high-quality local partners to help with specific challenges. This vibrant manufacturing sector employs 5,500+ people and comprises 600+ firms specializing in wood products, engineering, and health not to mention: high-tech composite jet components. Fiberglass film props. Compostable phone cases. Solar generators. Fruit beverages and snacks. Supercritical extraction systems. Oh, and snow plows.

Here in the Okanagan we're doing it all.

Industry Highlights

7%	provincial GDP is from B.C.'s manufacturing sector
11%	Canada's GDP is from B.C.'s manufacturing sector
\$16B	contributed by manufacturing, employs 7.1% of B.C. workers and represents 9% of Canada's manufacturing GDP
5,895	people employed by the Central Okanagan's manufacturing firms
\$51B	in generated revenue (2017) in B.C., making manufacturing one of the largest sectors in Canada



Competitive Advantage

Canada's digital technology sector supports faster, sustainable and more intelligent production through AI exploration

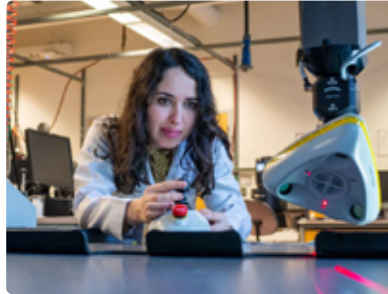
The Digital Technology Supercluster, a historic investment from the Government of Canada, industry and academia is driving innovation and advanced manufacturing

The region's dry climate is ideal for fiberglass/composite and wood products manufacturing

The region's geographic proximity to key transportation routes including Port of Vancouver, YLW, YVR, YYC is beneficial to the industry

Support/Resources

The Manufacturing Safety Alliance of BC has an office located in Kelowna, providing local support to manufacturers with training and advisory services to help them build and improve effective workplace safety programs.



The Composites Research Network (CRN) supports and advances the composites industry through knowledge creation, application, and collaboration between academia and industry.



The Manufacturing Engineering Program at the University of British Columbia Okanagan campus, designed to meet the modern demands of employers in advanced manufacturing, will develop engineers specializing in modern and evolving manufacturing environments.



The Materials and Manufacturing Research Institute (MMRI) fosters collaborative expertise to drive innovative solutions in advanced materials and manufacturing. It aims to integrate emerging technologies and materials through multidisciplinary research clusters, benefiting industries and communities.

A talent pipeline is supported by responsive public post-secondary institutions and directed regional attraction and retention initiatives in manufacturing.



Success Stories

[Manufacturing in the Central Okanagan](#)

[Vitalis](#): Extracting high value

[Geometrik](#): The sound of success

[Pela](#): A strong case for eliminating plastic



Quality of Life

Whether you come to the valley for the opportunities or the lifestyle, the Central Okanagan is the ideal place to strike a better work-life balance.

 **2000+**
Hours of Sunshine

 **4** Main Lakes

 **30+** Beaches

16
Golf Courses 

 **10+** Cideries & Distilleries

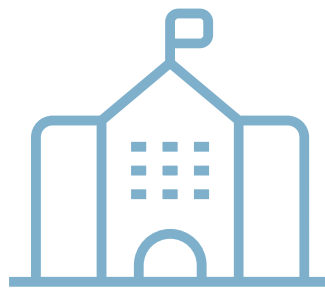
 **20+** Craft Breweries

 **45+** Licensed Wineries

12+ Galleries & Museums 

300+ Restaurants & Cafés 

20+ Fruit & Vegetable Markets 



43+ Schools

1 Kelowna General Hospital

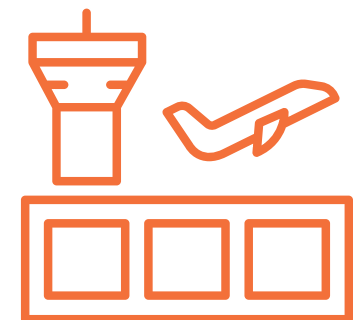
44+ Medical Centres

12+ Post-Secondary Institutions

100s of Trails 

30 Regional Parks 

2 Ski Resorts 



10th Busiest Airport (YLW)



Housing

Average rent for 2-bedroom apartment in 2022: **\$1,665**

Vacancy rate for 2-bedroom apartment in 2022: **1.2%**

Kelowna CMA's homeownership rate is 70.7% while renters are at **29.3%**

Occupied dwellings increased **15.9%** from 2016 to 2021 (compared to 6.4% in Canada and 8.4% in B.C.)

Population living in single detached homes and apartment buildings is up **52.0%** since 2016

Median home price for a new single home in Kelowna CMA in 2022: **\$1,225,000**

Median resale home price for a single home in Kelowna CMA in 2022: **\$1,030,000**



Lifestyle

Kelowna household median income: Up by **19.5%** since 2016 (in line with Canada at 19.4%)

West Kelowna (\$99K) and Central Okanagan East Electoral Area (\$99K) had the highest median total household income in 2020, above the BC median income of \$85K



Commuting

Average commuting time in the Central Okanagan (19.5 min.) is below the provincial (24 min.) and national (23.7 min.) averages

Health in the Central Okanagan

The Central Okanagan's health sector comprises of Interior Health and Kelowna General Hospital (KGH), offering integrated care, tech solutions and stable employment for a growing and aging population.



People Committed to Caring

With a vision of health and well-being for all, caring is at the heart of Interior Health. Delivering programs and services to over 834,000 people across British Columbia's Southern Interior, Interior Health has worked alongside partners and communities in the pursuit of a healthier tomorrow for over twenty years. Interior Health is proud to offer a wide range of health programs, including:

Home and Community Care

Long-term Care

Seniors Care

End of Life Care

Mental Health & Substance Use

Environmental Health

Public Health

- Healthy Living

- Aboriginal Health

- Infant & Youth

- Sexual Health

- Lab & Medical Imaging Services

The Future of Care

Established in 1908, Kelowna General Hospital (KGH) started as a humble 19-room community healthcare facility. Its start was made possible by the contributions of a small group of philanthropic citizens and a land donation from the Kelowna Land & Orchard (KLO) company. Over the years, KGH has evolved into a renowned teaching hospital and a primary referral center, catering to the healthcare needs of over one million individuals across the interior of B.C.

Its divisions encompass emergency and trauma care, housing the UBC Okanagan academic campus, as well as providing specialized services through its 44 medical facilities.



Interior Health



Live Where You Vacation

Almost everything is within a short twenty-minute drive from the Central Okanagan. You can immerse yourself in nature and choose your adventure. Embrace Kelowna’s diverse winter activities—hit the slopes at Big White Ski Resort or snowshoe at Kelowna Nordic Ski & Snowshoe Club. In summer, when fruit blossoms have turned into a rainbow of ripened fruit, wake up at dawn to get to an early tee time and then head to Lake Country’s Farm Gate Trail for freshly-picked fruit and vegetables. When the sun reaches its peak, head to one of more than 30 beaches for a swim. Check out the new 27 km Kelowna Paddle Trail or rent a watercraft at Bear Creek Provincial Park in West Kelowna.

Summer is also the ideal season to catch an outdoor concert, tour a winery or explore the area’s beautiful waterfalls.



Choose Your Own Adventure

- ✓ Paddleboard or kayak
- ✓ Hike, bike and horseback riding
- ✓ Tour and explore farms, orchards, wineries and markets
- ✓ Ski and snowboard
- ✓ Golf at one of the region’s 16 courses

For fun in the sun, plan a day in **Lake Country**. The Okanagan Rail Trail is perfect for family walks, cycling or jogging. For beach lovers, rent a kayak or paddle board.

In the winter, take in **Peachland’s** natural beauty at Wilson Lake Ski and Snowshoe Trails. Discover its 37 km trail system. In summer, Swim Bay’s beaches offers a zipline, rope swing, wharf and diving board.

For wine lovers, head to Hainle Vineyards Estate Winery—the Okanagan’s most historic winery and the first certified organic winery in Canada.





Culture & Arts

No matter what type of cultural experience you seek, you're sure to find it in the Central Okanagan. The region's cultural districts abound with studios, art galleries, theatres, community centres, libraries, museums, restaurants and even a casino.

In the heart of Kelowna's Cultural District, the [Kelowna Art Gallery](#) showcases a variety of local, national and international exhibitions.



The [Rotary Centre for the Arts](#) provides a place for artists, musicians, dancers and actors to practice and perform. Inside, the Kelowna Community Theatre hosts artists in the performing and visual arts.



Make your way to the edge of town and you'll discover more outstanding indoor and outdoor art to explore. The [Uptown Mural Project](#) in Rutland's Business Improvement Area offers walking tours that showcase colourful contemporary street art by some of Canada's best mural artists.



The [Okanagan Regional Library \(ORL\)](#) is a vibrant hub of knowledge and community engagement, offering a vast collection of physical and digital resources. With diverse programs, events, and partnerships, the ORL fosters learning, connection, and cultural enrichment for all ages, making it a dynamic cornerstone of the region's education and exploration.



Visit the [Okanagan Heritage Museum](#) to learn through the region's history and culture. Engaging exhibits, artifacts, and interactive displays offer a captivating glimpse into the past and present.



[Creekside Theatre](#) is more than a venue – it's a destination that invites you to immerse yourself in a world of captivating performances and diverse programs. With a commitment to fostering creativity and connecting communities, this theatre stands as a vibrant hub for entertainment and artistic expression.



For art enthusiasts, visit [Peachland Art Gallery](#), where every season brings diverse and captivating artworks, showcasing local talent and creativity.



All-ages can embark on a journey through the town's rich history at the [Peachland Museum](#). Housed in a volunteer-built 1910 Baptist Church, its exhibits offer year-round fascination such as a historic Beach Avenue miniature and working model of the Kettle Valley Railway.



Explore West Kelowna's vibrant art scene with the [Public Art Tour](#), showcasing captivating sculptures and murals. Immerse yourself in creativity at the Art Gallery at Grizzly Winery, where local art meets fine wine. Uncover the area's history at the Westbank Museum, bridging the past and present through captivating exhibits.



Experience the rich Indigenous culture in West Kelowna through a variety of activities. Explore the stunning Westbank First Nation sculptures and murals, showcasing intricate artworks that tell the stories of the land and its people. Then, immerse yourself in the history and tradition at [Sncəwips Heritage Museum](#) to experience the Okanagan's collections, histories and oral stories of the syilx people from a Sqilxw perspective. End the day by heading to Indigenous World Winery & Distillery, where you can savour exquisite wines from Okanagan and Similkameen Valleys and spirits featuring Indigenous artwork while overlooking Lake Okanagan.





Events & Festivals

Visit the region any time of year and you're sure to find something fun happening in the Central Okanagan. From festivals, concerts, winery and vineyard events, art exhibits, seasonal craft fairs, cultural and family events—there's no shortage of family-friendly events to choose from and lots of reasons to celebrate all year round!

In the spring, you can shop local at the Craft Culture Kelowna Spring Market. In July, Bernard Avenue goes pedestrian for [Meet Me on Bernard](#), showcasing performances, programs, art installations and more. Parks Alive produces 50 live events at various parks and stages across Kelowna.

Kelowna International [Fringe Festival](#) showcases drama, comedy, musical theatre, clowns, dance, multimedia works and more! In the fall, discover wine touring at its best and why agri-tourism in the valley is a growing trend.

Come winter, head less than an hour's drive from town and check out the snow-covered playgrounds that make winter fun such as [Big White Ski Resort](#), named one of the best ski resorts for beginners in the world by The Times.

Known for their lively events, Peachland has weekly Farmer's Market where locals and visitors can purchase fresh produce, artisan crafts, and enjoy the community spirit. For car fanatics, The [World of Wheels](#) event ignites excitement as classic cars line the streets. When autumn approaches, the Peachland Fall Fair, is an annual celebration that showcases local talents, crafts, and harvest treasures.

Visit Westside every Friday night for [Music in the Park](#) and enjoy free live performances by local talent and emerging artists with the whole family. Available from June to the end of August.



All are Welcome Here

Our Central Okanagan community wholeheartedly recognizes the immense value of embracing and celebrating diversity.

With our ever-evolving demographics, we place great importance in actively supporting inclusive initiatives.

From experiencing diverse cuisines from our array of restaurants and bars or exploring the easily accessible Okanagan Rail Trail that provides ample opportunities for outdoor recreation, we are unwavering in our commitment to ensuring everyone feels welcomed and valued. So, whether you're a local or a visitor, we invite you to join our vibrant community and experience the genuine warmth, diversity, and inclusivity that make the Central Okanagan truly extraordinary.



OUR COMMUNITIES

The Central Okanagan is Made of Seven Communities








Home to more than 222,000 residents, each community is unique and worth exploring.



- 44** City of Kelowna
- 46** City of West Kelowna
- 48** District of Lake Country
- 50** District of Peachland
- 52** Westbank First Nation
- 56** Central Okanagan Electoral Area West
- 58** Central Okanagan Electoral Area East



Demographics

	Population 2021:	144,576 › 13.5% growth from 2016
	Median Age:	42.4
	Median Total Household Income in 2020:	\$82,000 › 19.5% growth from 2015
	Median Home Price Resale:	\$725,000
	Median Home Price New:	\$1,270,000
	Major Industries Breakdown:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Real Estate and Rental and Leasing 2. Construction 3. Professional, Scientific and Technical Services
	Average Commute Time:	18.1 minutes

Business Count 2022

Without Employees
16,219

With Employees
7,215

Total
23,434

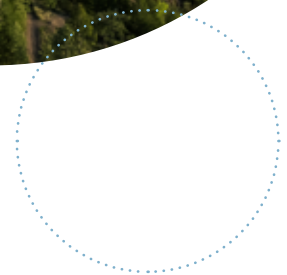
Source: [Census 2021](#)

The City of Kelowna is the largest city in the Central Okanagan and one of the fastest-growing cities in Canada. Named the most entrepreneurship-friendly large city in Canada according to the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, the city is home to more than 23,000 businesses.

Located along the beautiful shores of Okanagan Lake, in the heart of the stunning Okanagan Valley, the [City of Kelowna](#) is an outdoor oasis filled with endless trails, parks and beaches. The lake offers opportunities for boating, swimming or fishing and nearby mountains attract hikers, skiers and outdoor enthusiasts. While golfers tee it up at our 11 courses, those seeking bustling urban amenities will find restaurants with delectable food, award-winning wines, craft beers and ciders, local shopping, museums, live entertainment and cultural festivals.

An economic powerhouse, Kelowna is home to robust industry sectors, a place filled with entrepreneurial energy and a supportive business environment. It's a city that's shaped by collaboration and responsible decision-making, continually seeking smart ways to adapt to rapid growth without wavering on its commitment to its community.

The City continues to build a successful community that honours its rich heritage and respects the natural wonders that contribute to its identity. As a place with deep agricultural roots, Kelowna understands the need to protect the environment, manage growth and be resilient as the future unfolds.



Key Facts

Kelowna has the best of rural and urban lifestyles packed into one, along with an international airport, quality post-secondary institutions including UBC Okanagan and Okanagan College, and the Kelowna General Hospital: the premier healthcare facility in the region.

Vibrant, inclusive, diverse and naturally beautiful, Kelowna is a thriving mid-sized city that welcomes people from all backgrounds.

Kelowna boasts a diverse economy including manufacturing, aerospace, digital technology, agriculture, viticulture, tourism and cannabis.





Demographics

	Population 2021:	36,078 › 10.5% growth from 2016
	Median Age:	44.0
	Median Total Household Income in 2020:	\$99,000 › 17.9% growth from \$83,942 in 2015
	Median Home Price Resale:	\$750,000
	Median Home Price New:	\$1,240,000
	Major Industries Breakdown:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Real Estate and Rental and Leasing 2. Construction 3. Professional, Scientific and Technical Services
	Average Commute Time:	21.6 minutes

Business Count 2022

Without Employees
3,220

With Employees
1,200

Total
4,420

Source: [Census 2021](#)

The second largest city by population in the Central Okanagan, West Kelowna celebrated 15 years as a city in 2022. Over this period, it has transformed from a rural community into a thriving young city. Like most areas of the Okanagan, the City of West Kelowna is a popular destination for tourists, business professionals and new residents. This visually stunning community and four-season playground offers something for everyone to enjoy.

[West Kelowna](#) is located between the two major centres of Vancouver and Calgary. Convenient transportation access via the Highway 97 Connector provides an efficient connection to the Lower Mainland. People worldwide come to West Kelowna to enjoy the scenic vistas, great people and to experience the overall quality of life. It attracts those looking to live, work and play in a beautiful lakeside and mountainside community with a rich agricultural history, abundant parks and trails, and access to modern amenities.

West Kelowna continues to experience record-breaking growth. According to Stats Canada, its population grew at a rate of 10.5% between 2016 and 2021. The city has been investing in infrastructure, economic growth and prosperity, strengthening the community and fostering safety and well-being. West Kelowna has a diverse economy, which includes agriculture, construction, finance, food and retail services, lumber manufacturing, technology and tourism, including 17 world-renowned wineries and three breweries.

The City of West Kelowna envisions a place where people live in harmony with the lands and water, and with one another. With a commitment to maintaining a deep connection with the region's agricultural roots and celebrating its one-of-a-kind character, this inclusive and supportive community is poised to welcome any changes the future may bring through innovation and collaboration.



Key Facts

West Kelowna has a thriving business community with 4,400+ active businesses based in the city.

A 750 metre paved multi-use pathway on Whitworth Road provides a separated path to Pebble Beach and Goats Peak Trail, encouraging residents and visitors alike to get outside and explore.

The Rose Valley Water Treatment Plant is the single largest construction project the City of West Kelowna has undertaken. Construction on the \$75 million project began in 2020, with a goal to deliver 70 million litres of treated water per day throughout the city.



LAKE COUNTRY
Life. The Okanagan Way.



Demographics

	Population 2021:	15,817 > 22.4% growth from 2016
	Median Age:	44.0
	Median Total Household Income in 2020:	\$98,000 > 17.7% growth from \$83,24 in 2015
	Median Home Price Resale:	\$800,000
	Median Home Price New:	\$1,265,000
	Major Industries Breakdown:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Public administration 2. Utilities 3. Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction
	Average Commute Time:	22.6 minutes

Business Count 2022

Without Employees
1,513

With Employees
564

Total
2,077

Source: [Census 2021](#)

The District of Lake Country is one of the fastest-growing communities in British Columbia. The northernmost community in the Central Okanagan, this vibrant community has grown by 22% since 2016.

Its tranquil lakes, green rolling hills, lush orchards and wineries make [Lake Country](#) the perfect setting to exercise a healthy work/life balance. It's just the place to make friends that will last a lifetime, explore its rich history, growing economy and all-seasons playground.

Not only is Lake Country home to three major lakes – Okanagan, Wood and Kalamalka, but it's also surrounded below by the lush hills of the Okanagan Valley. Unparalleled natural beauty, fresh farm produce, award-winning wineries – there is something for everyone regardless of age, ability or interest.

A rural community with agriculture at its heart, many of the local farmers have learned farming from past generations. Apples, peaches and cherries are in abundance along with many different types of vegetables. All these can be found fresh at the Farm Gate stands along the Farm Gate Trail during the summer months.

With only a small amount of land base dedicated to commercial and industrial enterprises, the district is focused on smart industrial and commercial growth that complements its rural and agricultural nature.

Only minutes from Kelowna and Vernon, the Kelowna International Airport and UBC Okanagan, Lake Country gives residents access to the urban amenities while enjoying the peace and serenity of small-town living.



Key Facts

The top 3 industry sectors based on employment distribution in Lake Country are: construction, health care and social assistance and retail trade.

It's made up of four neighbourhoods or wards, (Carr's Landing, Okanagan Centre, Oyama & Winfield) which have their own rich histories and cultural life.

Lake Country is the only municipality in the province of B.C. to operate with a hybrid ward system. One council member is elected from each of the neighbourhood wards and eligible voters elect the mayor and two council members at large.

The District of Lake Country was incorporated in 1995.



Demographics

	Population 2021:	5,789 > 6.7% growth from 2016
	Median Age:	60.0
	Median Total Household Income in 2020:	\$81,000 > 17.7% growth from \$72,294 in 2015
	Median Home Price Resale:	\$700,000
	Median Home Price New:	N/A
	Major Industries Breakdown:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Real Estate and Rental and Leasing 2. Construction 3. Professional, Scientific and Technical Services
	Average Commute Time:	26.6 minutes

Business Count 2022

Without Employees
556

With Employees
180

Total
736

Source: [Census 2021](#)

The District of Peachland is a family-friendly, lakeside community most people only dream about visiting.

[Peachland](#) is a diverse, healthy, sustainably-developed intergenerational community with a quaint and lively downtown featuring locally-owned boutiques and restaurants.

Bordering Lake Okanagan, this stunning community has 11 km of public shoreline in the heart of a recreation paradise. Swim Bay is a popular family attraction for locals and tourists alike. With a summertime lifeguard-supervised beach, zipline activities and diving boards, this swimmer's paradise attracts more than 10,000 visitors each summer.

Peachland is a place to celebrate. With notable special events like the World of Wheels classic car show, Canada Day, Easter Egg Hunt, Halloween Spooktacular, Christmas Light Up and the upcoming 103rd Annual Peachland Fall Fair, there's always something to commemorate.

With a commitment to embracing its natural surroundings, this community seeks responsible growth and development to maintain the small-town character and preserve the environment.



Key Facts

Situated on 11 kilometers of Okanagan lakefront, Peachland has the full gamut of businesses and amenities for everyone to enjoy.

Peachland is within easy reach of more than 200 estate wineries and microbreweries.








From painting and pottery lessons to pickleball, Peachland's all-ages Community Centre is packed with programs all year long.

Peachland offers beach access, wilderness parks, trails, skate parks and boat launches.

The outdoor fitness trail is designed to help seniors stay active but is also suitable for all ages.



Demographics

	Population 2021:	9,134 > 20% growth from 2016
	Median Age:	58.4
	Median Total Household Income in 2020:	\$63,600 > 18.3% growth from \$53,742 in 2015
	Median Home Price Resale:	N/A
	Median Home Price New:	N/A
	Major Industries Breakdown:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Construction 2. Real Estate and Rental and Leasing 3. Professional, Scientific and Technical Services
	Average Commute Time:	20.4 minutes

Business Count 2022

Without Employees
482

With Employees
262

Total
744

Source: [Census 2021](#)



WESTBANK
FIRST NATION
(Tsinstikeptum 10)



Demographics

	Population 2021:	1,766 > 24.7% growth from 2016
	Median Age:	52.0
	Median Total Household Income in 2020:	\$90,000 > 16.5% growth from \$77,227 in 2015
	Median Home Price Resale:	N/A
	Median Home Price New:	N/A
	Major Industries Breakdown:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Real Estate and Rental and Leasing 2. Construction 3. Professional, Scientific and Technical Services
	Average Commute Time:	18.2 minutes

Business Count 2022

Without
Employees

146

With
Employees

54

Total

200

Source: [Census 2021](#)



Located in south-central British Columbia, Westbank First Nation (WFN) is one of eight Okanagan Nation communities, proudly upholding a rich syilx cultural heritage.

A division of the Interior Salish, the syilx traditional territories extend from the south-central interior of British Columbia to North Central Washington State. The syilx people speak the nsyilxcən language and have called this valley home for thousands of years, with their traditional territories spanning from the BC Interior to Washington State.

Offering a unique blend of natural beauty and traditional practices, WFN offers vibrant community experiences like Indigenous tours, art galleries, and outdoor activities. Stroll around the Kalamoior Regional Park or savour local flavours at Indigenous-owned businesses, [WFN](#) has something for everyone to enjoy.

Rather than being governed under Canada’s Indian Act, WFN has been governed under a modern and comprehensive set of community laws since 2005, with full jurisdictional control over its lands and resources. Being the first Reserve in Canada supported by Land Title Insurance, WFN’s pioneering land tenure system is guaranteed alongside a modern taxation system, ensuring safe investments.

WFN’s reserve lands are comprised of five land parcels totalling 5,340 acres next to the cities of Kelowna and West Kelowna. Forty percent of WFN lands are developed and are fully serviced with cable, water, sewer and other utilities. The remaining reserves are very desirable for future economic growth, as the area responds to increasing demands for development.

As a proud leader in Indigenous self-government, WFN and its administration champions progressive economic, cultural, and social services for its members, residents and businesses, while embracing the vital role of tourism in its economy.

Setting a remarkable example, WFN boasts Canada’s largest commercial development and a dynamic non-Indigenous population. The pioneering Westbank First Nation Economic Development Commission fosters a self-sufficient, business-oriented community, strengthening connections between government, members, and enterprises. WFN shines as a beacon of Indigenous excellence across Canada.

WFN stands out among First Nations across Canada. WFN has the largest commercial development, the highest non-Indigenous population and has created the first First Nation Economic Development Commission in Canada. With a vision of being a healthy, business-oriented community that is economically self-sufficient, WFN’s EDC prioritizes business retention, facilitation and attraction. It also provides linkages between government, members and businesses.

Key Facts








There are approximately 855 Westbank First Nation Members, the majority of whom reside on reserve along with 10,000 non-Member residents.

WFN supports 500 businesses on the reserve, including many international box stores and more than a dozen major financial institutions.





Demographics

	Population 2021:	2,897 > 45.5% growth from 2016
	Median Age:	54.8
	Median Total Household Income in 2020:	\$85,000 > 27.0% growth from \$66,912 in 2015
	Median Home Price Resale:	\$645,000
	Median Home Price New:	N/A
	Major Industries Breakdown:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Real Estate and Rental and Leasing 2. Construction 3. Professional, Scientific and Technical Services
	Average Commute Time:	35.8 minutes

Business Count 2022

Without
Employees
261

With
Employees
68

Total
329

Source: [Census 2021](#)

The Central Okanagan Electoral Area West extends along the western shoreline of Okanagan Lake, north of West Kelowna and includes Crystal Mountain Ski Resort area. It has pockets of single-family residential neighbourhoods and recreational centres and tourist resorts.

The predominant communities in the [Central Okanagan Electoral Area West](#) are linked by Westside Road, a single road running parallel to Okanagan Lake. They include: Trader's Cove, Wilson's Landing, Fintry, Valley of the Sun, Ewing, Killiney and Westshore.

Brent Road and Trepanier is a rural area north of Peachland and west of West Kelowna, with another section located south of Peachland. The area includes residential neighbourhoods, agricultural lands, community parks, greenways and regional parks.

Forestry, aggregate and gravel extraction were traditionally the major industries in the area.

Today, the predominant businesses in the region include: home-based and agricultural businesses, timber and gravel extraction operations and Camp Okanagan, a tourist commercial business.

Information obtained from the Rural Westside OCP and the Brent Road/Trepanier OCP.










Key Facts

The North Westside continues to represent a relatively small portion of the regional population base of 1,205 persons or less than 1% overall.

The historical records of the plan area date back to 1821 with establishment of the Hudson's Bay Fur Brigade trail, which represented a fur trading supply route through the Okanagan Valley north to Kamloops.



Demographics

	Population 2021:	4,258 > 11.6% growth from 2016
	Median Age:	51.6
	Median Total Household Income in 2020:	\$99,000 > 15.8% growth from \$85,504 in 2015
	Median Home Price Resale:	\$750,000
	Median Home Price New:	N/A
	Major Industries Breakdown:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting 2. Real Estate and Rental and Leasing 3. Construction
	Average Commute Time:	22.1 minutes

Business Count 2022

Without
Employees
422

With
Employees
146

Total
568

Source: [Census 2021](#)

South Slopes

This community is located within the [Central Okanagan Electoral Area East](#) outside the City of Kelowna including the south end area of Lakeshore Road.

While forestry was historically a major industry in South Slopes, the Okanagan Mountain Park fire in 2003 had a major impact on the industry.

Recreation, gravel operations and a winery comprise South Slopes' other commercial activities.

The Kettle Valley Rail trail (KVR) and the number of parks in the area have spawned growing recreational activities in the South Slopes.

Ellison

Located to the east of Kelowna and south of Lake Country, the Ellison community's heritage is founded on agriculture, rural acreages and scattered residential neighbourhoods within scenic valley terrain.

The Ellison area initially developed as ranchland. In the early 1900s, irrigation systems were installed and the area became internationally known as excellent farmland. In subsequent years as transportation improved, fruit growers and orchardists gained prominence. Despite secondary industries and service centres located close to major roads and Highway 97, the Ellison agricultural and rural character has remained. Today, residential neighbourhoods predominate the community.

Joe Rich

Located east of Kelowna in the Mission Creek Valley, Joe Rich is a quiet, rural area. Joe Rich features sparsely spaced home and acreages, community and regional parks and trails set within a fire-protected forested region. Big White Ski Resort and Kelowna are just a short drive away along Highway 33. The mountainous landscape makes it a popular area for hiking, mountain biking, snowmobiling, skiing and all-terrain vehicle exploring.

Information obtained from the South Slopes OCP, Ellison OCP and Joe Rich Land Use Bylaw





Central Okanagan Economic Profile

2023 Edition

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